THE WISDOM OF UNITY

(*MANĪṢĀ-PAÑCAKAM*)
OF
ŚRĪ ŚAṄKARĀCĀRYA

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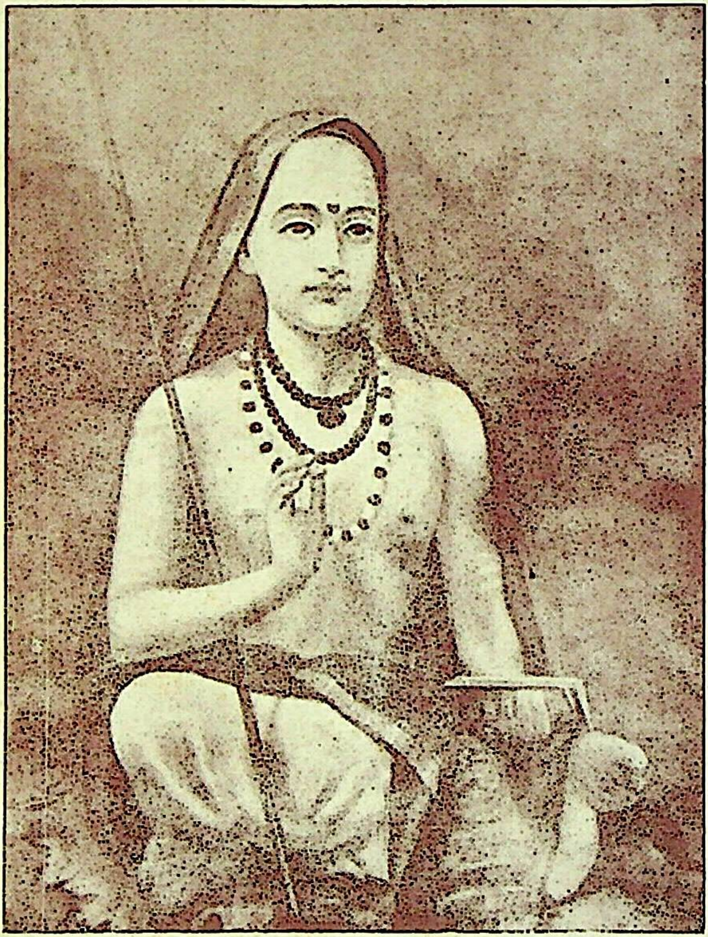

T. M. P. MAHADEVAN

Dedication

It is through the benign and bounteous grace of His Holiness Śrī Jagadguru Chandraśekharendra Sarasvatī, Śrī Śaṅkarācārya of Śrī Kāmakoṭī Pīṭha that Śaṅkara Vihar is continuing to perform its services to Advaita, one of them being the publication of the Jayanti Series. At the lotus-feet of His Holiness this blossom of 'the Wisdom of Unity' is offered during the most memorable Diamond Jubilee Year of His Holiness's Ascension to the Śrī Kāmakoṭī Pīṭha of Kāñcī.

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The Wisdom of Unity

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(*MANĪṢĀ–PAÑCAKAM*)
OF
ŚRĪ ŚAṄKARĀCĀRYA

Text in Devanāgari and Roman with English Translation, Commentary and Introduction

BY

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1967

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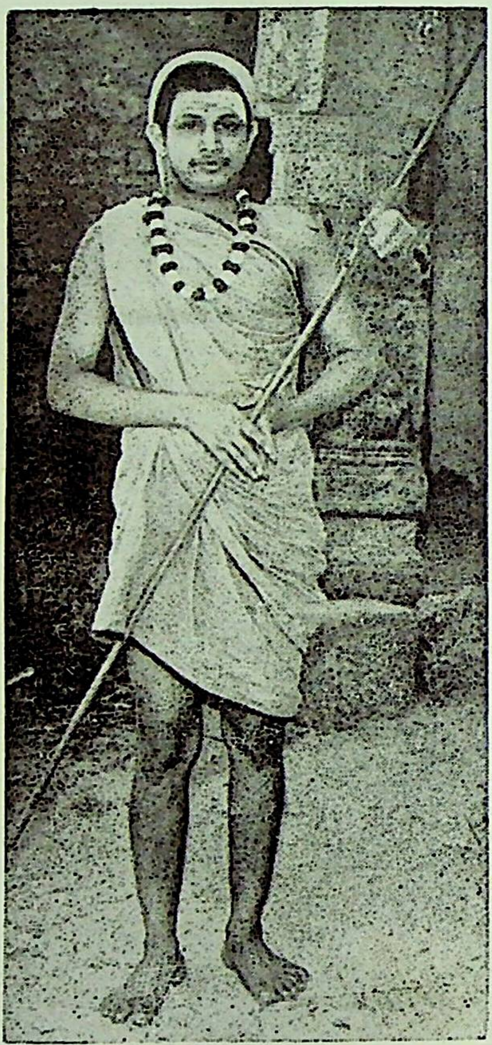

Sri Jayendra Sarasvati Swami

PREFACE

The present publication is the eleventh in the Śaṅkara Jayanti Series. The text here presented with English translation and commentary is the *Manīṣāpañcakam* consisting of five verses on 'Wisdom'. Śrī Śaṅkara declares in this text, as in all of his other works, the truth of Advaita which is that of Transcendent Unity. The distinctions and differences that teem this world—in fact, that are this world—are not final. When once nescience is discarded through wisdom, the eternal non-duality of the Self is realized. This truth is taught here in a picturesque manner against the background of a dramatic encounter the Master had with the Lord Viśvanātha in the guise of an untouchable in Vārāṇasī. A careful study of this text will reveal the true sense of such expressions of the *Bhagavad-gītā* as *samatva* (sameness), *sama-darśana* (perception of sameness), and *sama-buddhi* (wisdom of unity).

In the preparation of the present edition, two commentaries have been consulted—*Madhumañjarī* and *Tātparyadīpikā*.

I am greteful to my colleague Dr. N. Veezhinathan for correcting the proofs, to Messrs Ganesh & Co., Madras, for sponsoring this publication, and to the G. S. Press for the excellent printing.

It is through the benign and bounteous grace of His Holiness Śrī Jagadguru Chandraśekharendra Sarasvatī, Śrī Śaṅkarācārya of Śrī Kāmakoṭī Pīṭha that Śaṅkara Vihar is continuing to perform its services to Advaita, one of them being the publication of the Jayanti Series. At the lotus-feet of His Holiness this blossom of 'the Wisdom of Unity' is offered during the most memorable Diamond Jubilee Year of His Holiness's Ascension to the Śrī Kāmakoṭī Pīṭha of Kāñcī.

May Śrī Śaṅkara accept this offering!

Madras,
May 1, 1967.

T. M. P. Mahadevan

CONTENTS

PREFACE	v
OBEISANCE TO ŚRĪ ŚAṄKARA	viii
PROLOGUE	1
TEXT	8
EPILOGUE	46
NO 'HIGH' AND 'LOW' FOR THE WISE	48

Obeisance to Śrī Śaṅkara

आन्दघनमद्वन्द्वं निर्विकारं निरञ्जनम् ।
भजेऽहं भगवत्पादं भजतामभयप्रदम् ॥

ānandaghanam advandvaṁ
nirvikāraṁ nirañjanam,
bhaje'haṁ bhagavatpādam
bhajatām abhayapradam.

I worship the Bhagavatpāda (Śaṅkara), who is pure bliss, beyond the pairs of opposites, who is changeless and blemishless, and who imparts fearlessness to those that worship him.

यत्कटाक्षवशादेव मुच्येऽहं भवबन्धनात् ।
तं वन्दे सच्चिदानन्दं श्रीगुरुं करुणानिधिम् ॥

yatkaṭākṣavaśād-eva
mucye'haṁ bhava-bandhanāt,
taṁ vande saccidānandaṁ
śrī-guruṁ karuṇānidhim.

I offer obeisance to the blessed Preceptor who is existence–consciousness–bliss, and who is the treasure-trove of compassion, and by whose grace alone I shall be released from the bondage of birth.

—*Tātparyadīpikā*

THE WISDOM OF UNITY

(MANĪṢĀ-PAÑCAKAM)

Prologue

There is a legend connected with the composition of the quintad of verses *'Manīṣā-pañcakam'* by Śrī Śaṅkarācārya. One day, in Vārāṇasī, the Ācārya was walking towards the sacred river Gaṅgā, accompanied by his disciples. At a distance he espied an untouchable coming towards him, followed by four ferocious dogs. Addressing the untouchable, the Ācārya said, "Go away; go away!" The untouchable asked in reply, "What should go away; and from what!" Is it the physical body that should get away; or is it the self? If it be the body, all bodies are made of the same stuff, and why should one body get away from another? If it be the self, how can it get away, and from what, since it is non-dual?

अन्नमयादन्नमयमथवा चैतन्यमेव चैतन्यात् ।
यतिवर दूरीकर्तुं वाञ्छसि किं ब्रूहि गच्छ गच्छेति ॥

annamayād-annamayam athavā
caitanyam eva caitanyāt,
yativara[1] *dūrīkartuṁ vāñchasi*
kiṁ brūhi gaccha gaccheti.

1. Variant reading: *'dvijavara'* (*Madhumañjarī*).

"Is it one body made of food from another body made of food, or is it consciousness from consciousness — which, O the best among ascetics, you wish should get away, by saying 'Go away; go away'? Do tell me!"

Neither from the standpoint of matter, nor from that of spirit, is there difference. All matter is one; spirit is one. Differences arise, and seem to be relevant only when the two are superimposed, each on the other, or when the characteristics of each are mistaken for those of the other. Wisdom lies in discriminating between them, and in realizing that what appears to be matter is not real, and that spirit alone is real.

The untouchable goes on to explain the transcendent unity of the Self despite the apparent differences:

प्रत्यग्वस्तुनि निस्तरङ्गसहजानन्दावबोधाम्बुधौ
विप्रोऽयं श्वपचोऽयमित्यपि महान्कोऽयं विभेदभ्रमः।
किं गङ्गाम्बुनि बिम्बितेऽम्बरमणौ चाण्डालवीथीपयः-
पूरे वाऽन्तरमस्ति काञ्चनघटीमृत्कुम्भयोर्वाऽम्बरे ॥

pratyag-vastuni nistaraṅga-sahajānandāva-
bodhāmbudhau
vipro'yaṁ śvapaco'yam ityapi mahān
ko'yaṁ vibheda-bhramaḥ,
kiṁ gaṅgāmbuni biṁbite'mbaramaṇau
cāṇḍālavīthīpayaḥ-

pūre vā'ntaram asti kāñcanaghaṭī-
mṛtkumbhayor-vā'mbare.

"In the inner reality which is the ocean of natural bliss and knowledge, free of waves, what great delusion of difference is this — as 'this one is a *brāhmaṇa*' and 'that one is an eater of dog's flesh'! Is there difference in the sun which is reflected in the waters of the Gaṅgā and in the pools in streets where the untouchables live, or in ether that is present in a gold vessel and in a mud pot?"

The Self is of the nature of existence-consciousness-bliss. It is unchanging and unvarying — an ocean that is undisturbed and undisturbable. It is totally devoid of non-existence, inertness, and misery. It is not non-being, not non-self-luminous, not disvalue. Hence, the definition of its essential nature is stated in the formula, existence (*sat*)—consciousness (*cit*)—bliss (*ānanda*). Existence, consciousness, and bliss are not to be regarded as characteristics of the Self, each distinct from the other two. The Self or Brahman is not characterised by existence, etc. The Self *is* existence-consciousness-bliss; existence *is* consciousness; consciousness *is* bliss. There is not even the least trace of difference in and for the Self. The Self has nothing similar to it nor anything dissimilar; and it is not a whole of parts. It is homogeneous, the same all over, and always. Even these expressions, it

should be remembered, are made possible only after superimposing spatio-temporal limitations on the Self. But, the implication of such descriptions is to convey the truth that the Self is non-dual, that it has no limits or limitations. This is what the figure of the waveless ocean indicates. The Self is like an ocean without shore, and without the slightest agitation. How could any distinction pertain to it — distinctions such as the one between the high-born and the lowly of birth? There is no possibility of even the minutest difference in Brahman which is, everywhere, of one imparite essence (*ataḥ sarvatra akhaṇḍaikarase brahmaṇi na manāg-api bhedā'vakāśaḥ. Tātparyadīpikā*). The differences appear only on account of adjuncts such as the body, etc. These differences, however, do not affect the Self.

Two illustrations are given to explain this truth — one from the point of view of the reflection-theory (*pratibiṁbavāda*), and the other from that of the limitation-theory (*avaccheda-vāda*). The same sun gets reflected in the pure waters of the Gaṅgā and in the impure water-pools in localities where the untouchables live. The difference in the media of reflection does not make for any difference in the sun that is reflected. It is not a different sun in each case: it is the same sun. Similarly, the Self that is reflected in the different internal organs — in *brāhmaṇas* and *caṇḍālas* — remains the same without any change whatsoever. There

is nothing like the *brāhmaṇa*-self as distinct from the *caṇḍāla*-self.

There is no valid reason for rejecting the reflection-analogy as being defective. The argument that since the Self is formless it cannot be reflected is pointless, because the essential point in the analogy is that the differences in the adjuncts do not import any difference into the prototype; and this point is adequately explained in terms of the analogy. Surely, those who employ this analogy do not wish to maintain that there is a physical reflection, or that the internal organ is a gross physical medium of reflection like a sheet of water or a piece of mirror. The expression 'reflection' in regard to the Self is used in the figurative sense; the consciousness which is associated with the internal organ is not the original consciousness which is the Self; it is 'reflected' consciousness — *cidābhāsa*. The differences among mental consciousnesses are to be attributed to minds, and not to the Self which is pure consciousness. The analogy of reflection, thus, is not unsound. No analogy is on all-fours. If the compared and compared-with were identical, there would be no comparison.

The ether-analogy is suggested from the standpoint of the limitation-theory (*avaccheda-vāda*). Ether (*ākāśa*) is the nearest physical analogy to the Self. Phenomenally speaking, ether is all-pervasive and super-sensible. Hence, an Upaniṣadic passage

declares: "The Self is all-pervasive and eternal, like ether" (*ākāśavat sarvagataś-ca nityaḥ*). Ether cannot be really divided or delimited. Yet, superimposing the characteristics of apparently limiting adjuncts we speak of 'pot-ether', etc. When the pot is moved, for instance, ether is not moved. Differences there are between, say, a vessel made of gold and a pot made of clay. But in ether there is absolutely no difference. The ether present in the gold vessel is not superior to the ether present in the clay-pot. In fact, it is the same ether. Similarly, the Self is the same inspite of the different body-mind complexes. The bodies of *caṇḍālas*, *brāhmaṇas,* cows, etc., may be different. But, the Self which pervades them all is non-different. Like ether, it pervades all, is devoid of all relation, and is of one consistent homogeneous nature.

A wrong analogy may be cited in order to press the view that the Self becomes different in the different bodies, that it is really affected by the distinctions of inferiority-superiority, etc., on account of association with inferior bodies, superior bodies, etc. Does not milk, however pure it may be, become impure when kept in a leather-container? The reply is that the analogy is wholly inapt. Milk is of the same grade of reality as the leather-container, viz., empirical, and gets into actual relation with it. Not so is the Self. The *caṇḍala*-body is not of the same grade of reality as the Self. The association of the illusory body with the supre-

mely real (*pāramārthika*) Self will not produce in the latter the defects of the former. If a learned *brāhmaṇa,* for instance, has a dream in which he appears as a *caṇḍala,* it would be wrong to say that he really becomes an untouchable. Moreover, the Self is not, like milk, a limited whole; it cannot become the content of a container; it cannot take on, in reality, the attributes of the not-self. The essential nature of a thing can never change. The Self is unchanging, immutable. Therefore, why this distinction between a *brāhmaṇa* and a *caṇḍāla* for one who ought to see the same Self in all?

Śaṅkara listened to the words of wisdom that fell from the lips of the untouchable, and at once knew that it was Lord Śiva Himself that had come in the guise of the *caṇḍāla.* In truth, it was a piece of mono-acting — a case of the same Reality playing the double role of the teacher and the taught. Here, we have a dramatic illustration of what Śaṅkara says in the *Dakṣiṇāmūrti-stotra*: "It is the identical Reality that appears in such different forms as 'disciple' and 'preceptor', 'son' and 'father', etc. The untouchable and the Bhagavatpāda were both of them manifestations of the supreme Śiva. The present drama was enacted so that Bhagavatpāda Śaṅkara could pour out of his heart the quintessence of the wisdom of unity in a quintad of scintillating verses, the *Manīṣā-pañcakam.*

THE TEXT

VERSE ONE

जाग्रत्स्वप्नसुषुप्तिषु स्फुटतरा या संविदुज्जृम्भते
या ब्रह्मादिपिपीलिकान्ततनुषु प्रोता जगत्साक्षिणी ।
सैवाहं न च दृश्यवस्त्विति दृढप्रज्ञापि यस्यास्ति चे-
च्चाण्डालोऽस्तु स तु द्विजोऽस्तु गुरुरित्येषा मनीषा
मम ॥

jāgrat-svapna-suṣuptiṣu sphuṭatarā
yā saṁvid-ujjṛmbhate
yā brahmādi-pipīlikānta-tanuṣu
protā jagat-sākṣiṇī,
saivāhaṁ na ca dṛśyavastv-iti
dṛḍhaprajñāpi yasyāsti cet
cāṇḍālo'stu sa tu dvijo'stu
guru-ity-eṣā manīṣā mama.

"That consciousness which shines clearly in the states of waking, dream, and deep sleep, that witness of the world which interpenetrates all beings from Brahmā down to an ant —that, verily, I am, and not the seen object"— he to whom there is such firm knowledge is

the preceptor, be he a *caṇḍāla* or *brāhmaṇa.* This is my conclusive view.

The truth proclaimed by Śaṅkara in the *Manīṣā-pañcakam* is that from the standpoint of the supreme Reality — if standpoint it may be called — there are no differences. He who has realized this plenary truth is the real preceptor (*guru*): what the empirical status of such a one is, is of no moment at all — he may be a *caṇḍāla*, he may be a *brāhmaṇa*, or he may be any other: that makes no difference whatsoever to his non-dual experience, or to his title to true preceptorship.

When Śiva in the guise of an untouchable asked Śaṅkara, "What should go away; and from what?", the standpoint adopted was that of the supreme truth (*pāramārthika*). As soon as Śaṅkara recognized this, he knew that the untouchable was, verily, the Lord of the universe, Śīva, who had come to reveal the plenary experience of non-duality — that He was the teacher of the saving knowledge, the absolute Self, the lord of all. And immediately, he made a spirited affirmation of his faith in non-duality and gave an indication of his own Self-experience in the five verses constituting the *Manīṣā-pañcakam*.

The first four verses, according to Bālagopālendramuni, author of the *Madhumañjarī*, are based on the four major texts (*mahāvākyas*), res-

pectively: "Consciousness is Brahman' (*prajñānaṁ brahma*), of the *Ṛg-Veda,* 'I am Brahman' (*ahaṁ brahmāsmi*), of the *Yajur-veda,* 'That thou art' (*tat tvam asi*), of the *Sāma-veda,* and 'This self is Brahman' (*ayam ātmā brahma*), of the *Atharva-veda.* The fifth verse sings the praise of the status of freedom and bliss that results from the realization of the truth of the major texts—the status that is eternal, and not something that is newly acquired.

Now, the first verse:—

There are three states of experience: waking, dream, and deep sleep. In waking one experiences the external world of objects through instruments of cognition such as the sense-organs, and gains enjoyments which are gross in character. In dream, there is not the external world, nor do the sense-organs, etc., function; yet one experiences a world of images fashioned by the mind out of past impressions, and derives enjoyments that are of a subtle nature. In deep sleep, there is neither the external world of things nor the internal world of images; yet, it is not a state of absence of experience. For, on waking up again, one recalls that one slept happily, and that one did not know anything. While the latter aspect of the recall testifies to the presence of ignorance, the former bears testimony to the non-cessation of conciousness. An analysis of the three states of experience

reveals the truth that while the objects, modes of experience, etc., vary and are inconstant, the basic consciousness which is the Self, does not vary and is non-inconstant. The Self is self-luminous, and ever-shining. It is homogeneous, non-complex, the same all over. It is *prajñāna*, pure awareness, that neither rises nor sets.

The Prābhākara Mīmāṁsaka contends that the self is not self-luminous. According to him, the self is not consciousness, and while consciousness (*saṁvit*) is self-luminous, the self is not. It is consciousness that illumines the self as the locus and the object as the content. In a cognitive situation such as "I know the pot", consciousness or cognition which is self-luminous manifests the self or "I" as the locus and the pot as the object. Consciousness, in the Prābhākara system, is an attribute of the self; and since substance and attribute are different, the self is not consciousness. It is consciousness that is self-revelatory, and not the Self. Moreover, consciousness is not the only attribute of the Self; there are other attributes such as desire, aversion, volition, etc. These attributes appear in the self when there is conjunction of it with the mind, and as regulated by *karma*. In the state of deep sleep where there is no such conjunction, the Self remains absolutely attributeless; it is not characterised by even consciousness then. Thus, the Prābhākara view is that when there is cognition, the cognition reveals itself and

also the self as the locus and the object as the content. Without a cognition to reveal it, the Self is not revealed anywhere.

The Prābhākara distinction between the Self and consciousness is not acceptable to Advaita-Vedānta. The fundamental error in this view is that it reduces the Self to the ego-principle and converts consciousness into an attribute. The Prābhākara believes that the Self is made manifest by consciousness as its locus, even as the object is manifested as content. Now, we ask: Is the manifesting consciousness (*saṁvit*) inert or is it intelligent? If it is inert, then it would be on a par with the Self and the object; and there would result universal blindness, with nothing to illumine or to be illumined. If consciousness is intelligent, even then, how could the Self and the object be rendered intelligent by it? Surely, just because the son is a learned person, it does not follow that the father too should be a learned person. If it be said that consciousness becomes manifest along with the manifestation of the Self and the object, then we ask: are the two manifestations different from consciousness, or are they non-different? If the manifestation of consciousness is different from consciousness, then it would mean that consciousness is different from manifestation, that it is unmanifest, that in other words, it is inert. If this be the case, there would be nothing to distinguish consciousness from the

object. It cannot also be that the manifestation of the Self and the object is different from consciousness; for, if the manifestation of object is different from consciousness, then it cannot be that consciousness manifests the object; and a relation being required to relate the manifestation to consciousness, there would be infinite regress. Let us turn to the other alternative, that the manifestations of consciousness, on the one hand, and of the Self and the object, on the other, are non-different from consciousness. If a manifestation other than consciousness is not admitted, then it would mean that consciousness, the object and the Self are always together. But, the togetherness always of consciousness and the object is not possible; for, when consciousness has for its sphere a past or a future object, there is no togetherness. Some one may say at this point that of manifestation, the objects are the forms. But this is absurd. Objects and manifestation or luminosity are not the same. The objects are experienced as being long, short, big, small, etc.; not so is luminosity. The objects, in fact, are indeterminable; and they ought not to be confused with luminosity or manifestation which is determinate. In fact, it is this luminosity that is the Self, the immutable self-luminous consciousness. Consciousness is not an attribute of the Self; it is the Self. While the states of experience change and vary, consciousness remains without change and variation.

Terms such as 'consciousness' (*saṁvit*), 'knowledge', (*bodhaḥ*), 'witness' (*sākṣī*), 'the immutable' (*kūṭastha*), 'self' (*ātmā*), etc., which are familiar to those who are learned in the scriptures, are not so to the others. How could those others understand the truth?, it may be asked. The reply is that acquaintance with terminology is not necessary. There are equivalents to the terms in question in the popular languages used by the common people; with those equivalents they must be acquainted. Even otherwise, they know that 'awareness' is the condition of the possibility of all experience. All of them do have the experience "I know". They may not be able to formulate a proof, etc. Yet, they "know", they have "experience". Bālagopālendramuni explains this by an illustration. It is only those who are versed in the Purāṇas, etc., that know that the Moon is the 'heart' or 'eye' of God. This the common folk may not know. But these latter, however, know that the moon is a luminary with cool rays, round in shape, etc. Similarly, the people at large do know that consciousness is what makes experience possible. Thus, it is clear that even those who are devoid of discriminative wisdom are aware of the self as consciousness. Hence, the Ācārya says that consciousness "shines clearly" (*sphuṭatarā ujjṛmbhate*) in the three states of experience.

Having explained what 'consciousness' (*prajñānam*) is, the verse proceeds to indicate what

Brahman is. Brahman is the substrate of all beings from the Creator Brahmā down to ants and blades of grass. It is the self of all, the basic reality. It is the cosmic witness (*jagat-sākṣī*), the revealer of the entire universe. While it reveals everything, nothing is required to reveal it, for, it is self-luminous. The universe has no light of its own, being inert; and so, it cannot shine by itself. It cannot be said that even in the absence of a witness the inert universe may be known by the non-inert self which is the substrate of knowledge; for, we ask, how is this known, that the universe is inert and the self is non-inert? It must be admitted that it is as evidenced by knowledge or manifestation that the distinction is made between the object which is inert and the subject which is non-inert; it is that knowledge which, we say, is the witness-self.

The Bhāṭṭa-Mīmāṁsaka regards knowledge or manifestation as an act and a result. It is called an act because it is the fruit of an act of transformation, and act and fruit are identical. Manifestation, thus, is what is generated by an act of cognition in respect of its object. This is the Bhāṭṭā view which will not bear scrutiny. If manifestation, which is of the nature of the knownness of the object, is what is generated, it would be inert, even as the pot generated by clay is, on the rule that whatever is produced is inert. Manifestation, then, being indistinguishable from the object insofar as it too is inert, cannot manifest itself. More-

over, in regard to the statement of the Bhāṭṭā that cognition is the generator of manifestation, this must be made clear. Does cognition get transformed into manifestation, or does it merely occasion manifestation as a new product? Not the first, because cognition or knowledge is not subject to change, and transformation is possible of only what is subject to change, like milk which gets transformed into curd; of the unchanging knowledge, transformation is not possible; if knowledge were to change, then it would become an object, like milk; and if it becomes an object, it would cease to be knowledge. Nor is the second alternative, that knowledge occasions manifestation as a new product, intelligible; for, knowledge is not a substance; only what is a substance may produce another substance, e.g., the threads may give rise to cloth; and so, knowledge which is a non-substance cannot produce manifestation. Moreover, the theory of new production (*āraṁbha-vāda*) holds that the non-existent effect is produced, that there is production *de novo*. But, it makes no sense to say that of the non-existent manifestation, knowledge is the producer. Were knowledge to produce the non-existent manifestation, it may as well produce a barren-woman's son! Other than these two theories—the theory of transformation and the theory of new production—no explanation has been attempted for causation. And so, we say, manifestation is not generated by knowledge. Nor is

knowledge what is generated. What was stated above with reference to manifestation is true of knowledge also. If knowledge is what is generated, then it would be inert. The objector may, here, ask: Do we not observe that cognition of colour, etc., arises as a result of the contact of the sense-organs of sight, etc., with the coloured object, etc.? The reply is, that the appearance of the rise of knowledge is an illusion. What is generated, really, is the mental mode which has taken on the form of the object. The generatedness of the mental mode is wrongly transferred to the knowledge or consciousness (the self) which is conditioned by the mental mode, even as the red colour of the hibiscus flower is erroneously attributed to the crystal which is proximate to the flower. Thus, knowledge, appears to be generated, but illusorily. In all cases of knowledge, such as pot-cognition, cloth-cognition, etc., it is so. What is generated is only the particular mode of the mind, and not knowledge. Therefore, knowledge which is not what is generated is real; and manifestation or luminosity which is non-different from it is real. The argument may be put in the form of a syllogism: What is in dispute is real, since while being existent it is non-generated, like the self. It cannot be said that this syllogism may be used to establish the reality of prior non-existence (*prāgabhāva*); for, prior non-existence does not satisfy the condition of being existent. Thus, our

conclusion is that 'knowledge', 'manifestation', 'witness', 'self', etc., are but different expressions for the same reality.

Now, it has been shown that one and the same consciousness runs through the three states of experience, and that one and the same Brahman which is the substrate of all beings is the witness of the universe. These are not two—consciousness *and* Brahman; the truth is that consciousness *is* Brahman. How could the two be one—it may be asked—the subjective consciousness and the objective ground? Brahman is the cause of the origination, sustentation, and destruction of the world; the self is consciousness that resides in the individual. Can these two be the same? The answer is given in the same scriptures that define Brahman and Ātman. The Reality as conditioned by an individual psycho-physical organism is called jīva; the same Reality as the ground of the universe is referred to as Īśvara (God). When the limiting conditions are removed, it will be realized that Reality is non-dual. This is the meaning of the major texts. These texts should be interpreted in the same manner as the identity statement 'This is that Devadatta' is understood. 'This-ness' and 'that-ness' are adventitious; Devadatta is the same. Similarly, the Self which is pure being, consciousness, and bliss is the same; the distinction of microcosm and macrocosm does not apply to it.

Some thinkers believe that jīva-hood of the Self is real and natural, and not illusory—in which case Brahman would be different from the self. But, they are wrong in so believing. If the jīva-hood of the self be real and natural, then, even in the state of release the self would not be free from jīva-hood; for, one's nature can never be removed. If that be the case, pleasure, pain, etc., would continue to fall to the lot of those who have gained release. And, what release is this, that cannot guarantee freedom from pleasure, pain, etc.?

The thinkers in question may say: Just as by association with tamarind the verdigris is removed from copper, through worship, etc., of God, jīva-hood may be removed from the self; consequently, the self may gain release which consists of union (*sāyujya*) with God; and it will then be rid of *saṁsāra* with its associate pleasures and pains. The view that the above statement expresses is unintelligible. Just as burning and luminosity which constitute the nature of fire will at no time leave it, even so if jīva-hood is natural to the self, it will never leave. It is true that sometimes, when obstructed by spells, charms, etc., the burning and luminous nature of fire may not be evident; but even then, that nature is present in fire; were fire to lose its nature, it would cease to be fire. Similarly, if pleasure, pain, etc.—which, in fact, constitute jīva-hood—were natural to the self, they may remain obstructed for some time through special

disciplines, etc., but they will never get destroyed. Therefore, it should be admitted that, if the jīva be really and absolutely different from Brahman, it could never gain the status of Brahman (*brahma-bhāva*) even through hundreds of disciplines.

Some other Vedāntins say: "We do not believe in a release which consists in gaining identity with Brahman (*brahmatādātmya*); our conception of release is that it is a state in which the jīva realizes its similarity (*sāmya*) to Brahman". Now, we should like to know what "similarity to Brahman" means. Does release consist in gaining partial similarity to Brahman or total similarity? If it be said that the similarity to Brahman is in part, then, since the souls in transmigration are similar in part to Brahman in so far as they are conscious beings, they should be regarded as released souls. If the similarity is held to be total, then that is impossible. As between exactly identical things there is no similarity. There could be similarity only between things that are at least in some respects different. If the jīva and Brahman are equal or identical in all respects, then there would be nothing to distinguish the one from the other. And, what would result is our view, viz. that the jīva is non-different from Brahman, and not the view that the jīva is similar to Brahman.

The one who has realized the truth that the so-called individual soul is non-different from Brahman

is a *jīvan-mukta* (liberated while yet living). His knowledge is of the form "I am the Self, Brahman, and not the body, etc., which are perceived objects". His knowledge is firm, unshakable. Just as in the case of ordinary people, desires, etc., arise automatically, even without instruction, because of impressions gathered in previous lives, so in the case of the wise one, Self-knowledge arises without any present effort, on account of previous disciplines. To the wise one the Self is as immediate and direct as—nay, more than—the pot that is given in sense-perception.

The wise one to whom there is firm Self-knowledge is the true preceptor (*guru*)—be he a *brāhmaṇa* or a *caṇḍāla*. He is, verily, Brahman; and so the distinctions caused by birth do not apply to him. If it be asked how a *caṇḍāla* could become a preceptor, our reply is: if he has realized the Self, it means that he is free from all conceits conditioned by caste, etc., and so he is perfectly pure—in fact, he is the ever-pure, eternal, non-dual Brahman. The distinctions of caste, etc., do not belong to Brahman; they are illusorily caused by *karma* which itself is occasioned by nescience. The *Viṣṇu-purāṇa* declares, "The Self is neither a god, nor an animal, nor a human being, nor a tree".

pumān na devo na paśur-na
naro na ca pādapaḥ.

"Just as the one sky appears differently coloured as white, blue, etc., so the one Self appears as different on account of deluded perceptions."

sita-nīlādi-bhedena yathaikaṁ
dṛśyate nabhaḥ
bhrānti-dṛṣṭibhir-ātmā'pi
tathaikaḥ pṛthak-pṛthak.

Verse Two

ब्रह्मैवाहमिदं जगच्च सकलं चिन्मात्रविस्तारितं
सर्वं चैतदविद्यया त्रिगुणयाऽशेषं मया कल्पितम् ।
इत्थं यस्य दृढा मतिः सुखतरे नित्ये परे निर्मले
चाण्डालोऽस्तु स तु द्विजोऽस्तु गुरुरित्येषा मनीषा
मम ॥

brahmaivāham idaṁ jagac-ca sakalaṁ
cinmātra-vistāritaṁ
sarvaṁ caitad-avidyayā triguṇayā
'śeṣaṁ[2] mayā kalpitam,
itthaṁ yasya dṛḍhā matis-sukhatare
nitye pare nirmale
cāṇḍālo'stu sa tu dvijo'stu
gurur-ity-eṣā manīṣā mama.

2. Variant reading: *śeṣaṁ=seśvaraṁ* (*Tātparya-dīpikā*).

"I am Brahman alone. And, this entire world has been spread out by pure consciousness. All this, without residue, has been superimposed by me through nescience which consists of the three *guṇas* (*sattva, rajas,* and *tamas*)"—thus, he to whom there is firm knowledge in respect of the eternal, blemishless supreme (Brahman) whch is unexcellable bliss, is the preceptor, be he a *caṇḍāla* or a *brāhmaṇa*. This is my conclusive view.

The basic text for this verse is "I am Brahman" (*ahaṁ brahmāsmi*).

The wise one's experience is further defined here. For the one who has realized the non-dual Self, the world of duality is not real; for him, there is not the subject—object distinction. He knows that the world is an illusory appearance put up by nescience. Since nescience has ceased for him, he is not affected by *saṁsāra*.

The Self that is indicated by the concept "I" is Brahman; it is the plenary Reality which is eternal and distinctionless; it is pure consciousness which is the substrate of the world-appearance. The world is a superimposition on Brahman, even as the pseudo-silver is on nacre. Apart from the nacre, the silver has no reality. Similarly, apart from Brahman, the world is not real. As has already

been shown, the "I" and Brahman are the same; and so, it is on the "I" that the world is superimposed.

The world, it may be said, is not illusory like nacre-silver. Nacre-silver is a content of erroneous perception. Not so is the world which gives room for non-erroneous empirical usage. And so, the world must be regarded as being absolutely real (*pāramārthika*). To this contention, we reply: The world is a superimposition on the non-dual Brahman which is of the nature of seer (*dṛg-rūpa*), even as nacre-silver is a superimposition. Therefore it is that we consider the world to be non-real. Even though the world accommodates relatively non-erroneous empirical usage, it is what is superimposed because it is of the nature of what is seen (*dṛśyatvāt*), like nacre-silver. The world, in its entirety, is of the nature of what is seen, because it is inert, and is made manifest by the self-luminous seer, Brahman, which is pure consciousness. Therefore, the superimposed world of plurality is, indeed, non-real.

Now, may not non-duality too be non-real?, it may be asked. Our reply is that non-duality cannot be non-real. The non-dual Self is the seer; it is not of the nature of a seen object; and so, it cannot be what is superimposed. If non-duality, too, like duality, be what is superimposed, then, what is the substrate on which it is superimposed?

A substrate there should be, for, substrateless delusion is impossible. For non-duality which is said to be the superimposed, is the substrate non-duality itself, or is it duality? Since there is no non-duality other than the alleged superimposed non-duality, the first alternative is not possible. Nor is the second alternative intelligible, for non-duality cannot be superimposed on duality which is a mere illusion. Our experience in the world is that silver, etc., which are the contents of illusion are superimposed on nacre, etc., which are relatively real. And so, if non-duality is the superimposed, there should be a substrate which is supremely real, and not what is illusory. Nor may it be said that, while in the world what is real may be the substrate, in the case of non-duality that is not possible because there is nothing else besides it, and so, what is illusorily imagined may be the substrate for non-duality; for, duality has no substance whatsoever, since it is a mere superimposed appearance; it, in fact, has no reality other than that of Brahman which is its substrate; and, if duality which is the superimposed be regarded as the substrate, there would be the defect of self-contradiction. One and the same thing cannot be both the superimposed and the substrate. And, if both duality and non-duality be what are superimposed, then, since there is no third category at all, there would be no substrate, and the contingence of substrateless delusion would result.

It may be suggested: Let nullity (*śūnya*) be the substrate of both duality and non-duality. But, this suggestion, when analysed, would be found to be untenable. Nullity is the merest void; it can in no way be defined. It cannot be even designated as "it". How can it serve as substrate? How can it be the limit of sublation? The nacre, in the illustration, is the substrate because when the silver delusion is sublated in the form 'This is not silver' the nacre-nature of what is in front is affirmed in the form 'This is nacre'. But, nullity, even because it is nullity, cannot serve as the limit of sublation. The negation of the superimposed must lead to the affirmation of the substrate. No affirmation is possible of nullity. Were it to be affirmed, it will cease to be nullity.

Thus, it is clear, non-duality cannot be the superimposed. It is duality that is superimposed on non-duality which is Brahman, the homogenous pure consciousness. The world of duality has no reality of its own. What is real in it is Brahman—existence, consciousness, bliss. It is, therefore, stated in the present verse that the entire world has been spread out by pure consciousness, that it is a superimposition on pure consciousness which is the Self, and that the cause of superimposition is nescience, whose three constituents—*sattva, rajas,* and *tamas*—are responsible for the variety of phenomena that compose the world.

He who has realized the non-dual Brahman, which is the substrate of the world-appearance, is a *jīvan mukta*. No matter in what condition his body was born, and where, he is a true preceptor. The distinctions of caste, etc., do not belong to him, even as they do not belong to Brahman; for, verily, he is Brahman, the eternally pure Self.

Verse Three

शश्वन्नश्वरमेव विश्वमखिलं निश्चित्य वाचा गुरो-
र्नित्यं ब्रह्म निरन्तरं विमृशता निर्व्याजशान्तात्मना ।
भूतं भाति च दुष्कृतं प्रदहता संविन्मये पावके
प्रारब्धाय समर्पितं स्ववपुरित्येषा मनीषा मम ॥

śaśvan-naśvaram eva viśvam akhilaṁ
niścitya vācā guroḥ
nityam brahma nirantaraṁ vimṛśatā
nirvyāja-śāntātmanā,
bhūtaṁ bhāvi ca duṣkṛtaṁ pradahatā
saṁvinmaye pāvake
prārabdhāya samarpitaṁ svavapur-
ity-eṣā manīṣā mama.

"The entire universe constantly perishes"—determining thus through the teach-

ing of the preceptor, he who contemplates ceaselessly the eternal Brahman, has his mind rendered guileless and quiescent, gets the evil results of his past and future deeds burnt up in the fire of knowledge, and offers up his body to *prārabdha* (i.e. *karma* that is responsible for present embodiment). This is my conclusive view.

In this verse, the meaning of the major text, "That thou art" (*tat tvam asi*) is indicated.

When the competent teacher imparts the following instruction to the pupil who has the necessary qualification: "The basic Reality is Brahman; that thou art", the latter realizes the truth of non-duality. He knows at once that the world is an illusory appearance, that Brahman is the sole reality, and that he—the so-called individual—is non-different from Brahman. In other words, he realizes that the phenomena constituting the world are inconstant and perishing and that Brahman is the plenary reality, the true eternal Self. In order to achieve this realization, he has his mind rendered guileless and quiescent; he becomes free from passions, and gains stillness of mind. The residual mental impressions of the past are destroyed (*vāsanā-kṣaya*), and the mind itself ceases (*mano-nāśa*). Contemplation of the Self gains in depth and firmness. When the wisdom of the truth

(*tattva-jñāna*) has become firmly established, one gains release even while tenanting a body; he becomes a *jīvan-mukta*.

It will be clear that, since what makes for bondage is ignorance or nescience, what effects release is knowledge or wisdom. *Karma* or action cannot serve as the direct means to release, because it is itself a product of ignorance. As against this Advaita-view, some thinkers urge that a combination of knowledge and action (*jñāna-karma-samuccaya*) is the means. Scripture-ordained duties and good works should never be renounced; they should be combined with the quest for Self-knowledge in order to gain release. This view is not sound; for a combination of knowledge and action is not possible whether they be regarded as equals or as principal and subsidiary. Action demands that the individual concerned should consider himself to be an agent; and agency is possible only by identifying the self with the body-mind complex which is not-self. This wrong identification is due to ignorance. So, it is evident that ignorance is the root-condition of the possibility of action. Therefore, it does not stand to reason to hold that action is the means to release. Knowledge, in the present context, means knowledge of the non-dual Self which is not an agent or enjoyer. It arises as destroying ignorance, the cause of evil, consisting in veiling the true nature of the Self as Brahman. and projecting the illusory world. Since action and

knowledge are, thus, opposed to each other absolutely and completely, they cannot be combined. Moreover, they lead to contrary results—action reinforces bondage, knowledge effects release. Action is possible only where bondage is preserved; and through action *saṁsāra* is sustained. The knowledge of the Self, on the contrary, dispels the darkness of ignorance, and destroys the conceit of agency, etc., which constitute bondage. As action and knowledge cannot co-exist, they cannot be combined. When it is evident that knowledge and action cannot be treated as equals, or knowledge as the principal and action as the subsidiary, it does not require much effort to show that action cannot be the principal with knowledge as its subsidiary. The fruit of action is very small indeed—it is perishable fruit such as cattle, progeny, and heaven. Knowledge yields the highest fruit—the plenary bliss. Therefore, it is utterly improper to say that knowledge whose fruit is great is subsidiary to action whose fruit is small. The fore-sacrifices, *prayājas*, etc., may well be subsidiary to the *āgneya* sacrifice, etc., because the former have no separate fruit, and they occur in the context of *āgneya* for which fruit is mentioned. The rule that would apply here is that in the proximity of that which has fruit, that which has no fruit is the subsidiary thereof. Knowledge is not related to action (i.e. ritual), as the fore-sacrifices are to *āgneya*; because Scripture mentions fruit for know-

ledge—and that, the highest fruit. It cannot be said that the mention of fruit in the case of knowledge is an eulogy; for knowledge is not taught as a minor topic in the context of the ritual sections of the Veda. Knowledge constitutes the theme of the *jñānakāṇḍa*, viz, the Upaniṣads. It cannot, therefore, be made a subsidiary of ritual. Thus, since the contexts are different, knowledge cannot be regarded as subordinate to ritual. Furthermore, he who is eligible to perform ritual is the one who is endowed with desire for fruits such as heaven, progeny, etc., whereas he who is eligible for knowledge is the one who has renounced attachments. As the eligibility for knowledge is different from the eligibility for action, knowledge cannot be a subsidiary of action. We have already shown how opposed the two are to each other. The nature of one is what the nature of the other is not. Action is non-luminous, because it is a product of ignorance; knowledge is luminous, because it is of the nature of the self-luminous Brahman. Just like darkness and light, the two cannot be together. And so, how is it possible to combine them as principal and subsidiary?

It is not that action has no use whatsoever. Scripture-ordained duties, good works, serve to purify the mind. It is the purified mind that can pursue the path of knowledge. In this manner, we should understand the respective positions of *karma* and *jñāna* in the scheme of spiritual disciplines.

Karma is the remote auxiliary (*ārād-upakāraka*), and not the direct means to release. It is perfectly intelligible, therefore, that one should renounce all attachments before one could long for knowledge, or gain knowledge itself. Such a one has a mind which has been rendered guileless and quiescent.

Guilelessness and quiescence of the mind are the means that facilitate contemplation of Brahman which is unexcellable bliss. The guiles of the mind in the form of residual impressions (*vāsanā*), and get activitated as occasions arise. The *vāsanās* are the afflictions of the mind resulting from past repeated experiences. Their long-standing nature lends them strength and obduracy. They constitute what may be called the demoniacal heritage (*āsurī-saṁpat*) of the afflicted mind. How are these *vāsanās* to be removed? It is by cultivating the contrary tendencies. The tendencies that are opposed to the demoniacal heritage constitute what is known as the divine heritage or the heritage of the gods (*daivīsaṁpat*). Non-violence, freedom from pride, non-conceit, etc., are the virtues that go to form the divine heritage. These virtues should be cultivated and strengthened, so that the demoniacal tendencies could be overpowered and obliterated. The removal of the *vāsanās* (*vāsanā-kṣaya*) should, thus, be accomplished. The mind, then becomes guileless (*nirvyāja*). But, this is not enough. The mind itself should be destroyed (*manonāśa*); it should become quiescent (*śānta*).

The stuff of the internal organ as it gets transformed into successive modes going out to sense-objects is called 'mind' (*manas*). When the outgoing tendency is arrested through conscious control, and when the mental-stuff gets transformed into the mode of control, we have destruction of the mind. As long as the mind is not controlled or destroyed, the *vāsanās* will not get removed completely, and as long as there is some residue of the *vāsanās* still left, the mind will not be destroyed. The two disciplines, thus, are mutually helpful to each other. And, they together constitute the means to knowledge.

It has now been shown that *vāsanā-kṣaya* and *manonāśa* lead one to knowledge, and that knowledge is the direct means to release. The present verse further proceeds to point out the nature of the state that is called *jīvan-mukti*. When one gains release through knowledge, one's body need not fall. In fact, the continuance of the body is in no way incompatible with the status of release. What happens when release is gained is a change in perspective. Before release, one took the world of which the body is a part to be real; after gaining Self-knowledge, one realizes that the world is an illusory appearance. If the body were real, then release could come only after the destruction of the body. But, since the body is not real, its continued appearance or disappearance is of no consequence.

Karma which is responsible for the repeated embodiment of the soul is three-fold: *sañcita*, the fund of accumulated deeds of the past which will bring about future births; *āgāmī*, the deeds that one does in the present life and will do in future lives—these will be added on to *sañcita;* and *prārabdha*, that portion of the past deeds which has given rise to the present birth, i.e. the *karma* that has begun to fructify in the form of the present embodiment. Of these three varieties of *karma*, *sañcita* and *āgāmī* do not belong to the man of realization because they get burnt up in the fire of knowledge; and they do not any longer affect him by producing merit (*puṇya*) and demerit (*pāpa*), both of which are evil in so far as they perpetuate transmigration. If it be asked how could the man of realization be absolved from the evil results of *sañcita* and *āgāmī*, we reply: even because he does no longer identify himself with the illusory projections of nescience, beginning with egoity (*ahaṅkāra*) and ending with the physical body. His realization is of the form of the truth: "I did nothing in the past; I do nothing in the present; I shall do nothing in the future. In all the three times I am free from the sense of being an agent of actions. I am Brahman." What others may continue to observe as his actions are not *his* actions; they do not attach themselves to him even as water does not stick to the lotus-leaf. Thus, for the man of Self-knowledge, there are no deeds,

whether good or bad, nor the consequences thereof. As we have already shown, even meritorious deeds are of the nature of evil, since they too cause embodiment.

There now remains the question about *prārabdha-karma*: why should this too be not destroyed for the man of Self-knowledge? The one who asks this question is the one who bears a body and is yet unreleased; such a one sees the *jīvanmukta* also to continue living in a body. The answer has to be framed in the language that he can understand: the continuance of the *jīvanmukta's* body for a while longer has to be accounted for. The present body is the result of *prārabdha*; it is only when the fruit of *prārabdha* has been exhausted that the body will fall. But the continuance of the body does not in any way affect the *mukta's* state of wisdom; for he knows that the body is not real, that it is but an illusory appearance. But, then, the continuance of the effect after the cause has ceased to be may be objected to: When nescience, the cause of bondage and embodiment, has been destroyed, how could the body stay on? In answering this objection, several illustrations are given. The potter may remove the rod from the wheel on which he shapes the pot; but the wheel continues to rotate till the momentum is spent. Similarly, even though the cause of embodiment, nescience, has been destroyed through knowledge, its effect, viz., the body, may

persist till the *prārabdha* gets exhausted through enjoyment. In a dream a person sees a ferocious tiger; he is seized with fright and wakes up. Now, the cause of fear has been removed; yet, the person's body continues to tremble for a time. This is another example. Let us imagine an archer practising archery: he has a number of arrows in his quiver; one of the arrows he has taken out of the quiver and shot it from his bow at the target; another he has taken in hand and placed it on the bow-string, ready to be shot. Now, let us suppose that at this stage the archer resolves not to continue the practising of archery; he may, then, throw away the quiver full of arrows; he may also cast away the arrow that he has in hand; but he cannot recall the arrow he has already released from his bow; that must do its work, and only then it will stop. This illustration may help us in understanding why, while *sañcita* and *āgāmī* are not there for the *jīvan-mukta*, *prārabdha* must work itself out and is therefore inescapable. To the question: how to destroy *prārabdha*?, the answer is: by enjoying the merit and demerit occasioned by it. This is what is meant when it is stated in the present verse that the *jīvanmukta* offers up his body to *prārabdha*. But all this explanation, it should be remembered, is from the standpoint of the unreleased. For the *jīvanmukta*, there is no body at all; and so there is no need either for explaining the continuance of the body.

The Bhagavatpāda expresses the Self-experience of the *jīvan-mukta* thus elsewhere:—

dṛśi-svarūpaṁ gaganopamaṁ param
sakṛd-vibhātaṁ tvajam-ekam akṣaram,
alepakaṁ sarvagataṁ yad-advayaṁ
tadeva cāhaṁ satataṁ vimukta om-iti.

"The non-dual Reality is of the nature of the seer, comparable to ether; it is supreme, all-effulgent, unborn, one, immutable, stainless, and all-pervading: that (Reality), verily, I am — ever free, 'Om'."

Verse Four

या तिर्यङ्नरदेवताभिरहमित्यन्तः स्फुटा गृह्यते
यद्भासा हृदयाक्षदेहविषया भान्ति स्वतोऽचेतनाः ।
तां भास्यैः पिहितार्कमण्डलनिभां स्फूर्तिं सदा भावय-
न्योगी निर्वृतमानसो हि गुरुरित्येषा मनीषा मम ॥

yā tiryaṅ-nara-devatābhir-aham–ity–
antaḥ sphuṭā gṛhyate
yad-bhāsā hṛdayākṣadeha-viṣayā
bhānti svato'cetanāḥ,
tāṁ bhāsyaiḥ pihitārka-maṇḍala-nibhāṁ
sphūrtiṁ sadā bhāvayan
yogī nirvṛta-mānaso hi gurur-ity–
eṣā manīṣā mama.

That (Pure Consciousness) which is realized within clearly as "I" by animals, men and gods; that by whose light the mind, the sense-organs, the body, and the objects, which are by themselves non-intelligent, shine; that which is (hidden) like the solar orb that is covered by what are illumined by it (viz. the clouds)—contemplating that Effulgence always, the yogī becomes filled with the supreme happiness in his mind. That one is the preceptor. This is my conclusive view.

The major text whose meaning the present verse explains is: 'This self is Brahman' (*ayam atmā brahma*). The self is that which illumines the mind, the sense-organs, etc.; Brahman is the basic reality which shines as 'I' 'I' in all grades of beings — animals, men, gods. The identity or non-difference of the self and Brahman is not realized because of the veil cast by nescience (*avidyā*), which itself has no *locus standi* as apart from Brahman. Nescience which is itself illumined by Brahman hides it, even as the cloud which is itself made known by the sun's light covers the sun. The one for whom nescience has been destroyed through knowledge is the *mukta*, the true *yogī*. His is the bliss of Brahman; his mind gets filled with unexcellable happiness. Or rather, he is the one

who has realized his non-difference from Brahman that is the plenary bliss.

That which shines as "I" "I" in all beings (*jīvas*) is the supreme Self, Brahman. The following objection may be raised to this statement: In experiences such as "I am a man", the concept "I" is seen in apposition with the body, etc., as associated with the attribute of human-ness, etc. And so, the content of the concept "I" is the body, etc., and not the self. Our reply to this objection is: It is the self that is properly the content of the concept "I" (*aham-pratyaya*). The body, etc., which constitute the not-self, are the content of the concept "this" (*idam-pratyaya*). But because of delusion caused by superimposition, the attributes of the not-self appear as belonging to the self, even as "redness" seems to belong to the crystal in the proximity of the hibiscus flower. This is certainly an error, being the cognition of 'that' in what is not-that (*atasmin tad-buddhiḥ viparyayaḥ*). The gross body which is a modification of food cannot truly be the sphere of the concept "I". In the case of inert things such as pot, etc., it is clear that they cannot be the contents of the concept "I". The same is true of the body; hence, the body is not the self. The sense-organs too are not the self for the same reason, viz., that they are non-intelligent.

A doubt may arise in regard to the status of the intellect (*buddhi*). Is not the intellect at least,

which is intelligent, fit to be the sphere of the concept "I"? Our answer is: no. The intellect is subject to origination and destruction, like pot, etc., and is not of the nature of intelligence. Therefore, it cannot be the content of the concept "I". What is true of the intellect is true of the egoity (*ahaṁkāra*) also. The egoity is a mode of the *sattva*-constituent of the internal organ; and so, it is what is illumined by the self which is consciousness. It is inert like any other object, and cannot serve as the sphere of the concept "I". Moreover, the egoity is subject to mutations, as is evidenced by the experience of all people in the form: 'I am happy; I am miserable', etc. What is subject to mutation or transformation is not the self, e.g., the body. It is well-known that what is subject to transformation is non-eternal. The egoity which takes on several modes, in the manner we have just indicated, cannot be the intelligence-self; that it is inert by nature must be admitted. Thus all things ranging from the physical body upto the egoity are of the same class as pots, etc.; they are objects, and are not the self. It is the witness-self which is of the nature of pure consciousness that alone is the content of the concept "I".

If the self which is pure consciousness be the content of the concept "I", how could it be self-luminous?, it may be asked. How the self becomes the content of the concept "I", although self-lu-

minous, it is not difficult to understand. It is as self-luminous that the self becomes the content of the concept "I". The concept "I" is a mode of the mind, it is true. A cognitive mode reveals its object by (a) destroying ignorance regarding it, and (b) by illumining it. It is in this manner, for instance, that a pot is made known by the cognition relating to it. Cognition which is a mode of the mind pervades the pot (*vṛtti-vyāpti*); and as a consequence, the reflection of consciousness which is the self pervades the pot and illumines it (*phala-vyāpti*). The pot which is a dense object, thus, requires a double pervasion—pervasion by the mental mode and pervasion by the reflection of consciousness — before it becomes known. In the case of the self, however, what is necessary is only the mental mode in order to destroy the ignorance regarding it. When ignorance is destroyed, it shines of its own accord, being self-luminous. There is no need, here, of a reflection of consciousness. Thus it is that the self becomes the content of the mental mode, the concept "I". There is no incompatibility whatsoever with the self being self-luminous. In fact, it is the self as the witness that manifests even the concept "I"; and manifesting the concept, it manifests itself. The self-luminous, immutable, and eternal self is, thus, the content of the concept "I"; and that is Brahman.

Nothing other than the self is self-luminous. The mind, the sense organs, the body, and the objects have no light of their own. They are non-intelligent; it is by the light of the Self that they are manifested.

"If the Self is clearly manifest as "I" "I" to all living beings, then, all would get released without the least effort; there would be no need for any discipline." To this objection we reply: Although everyone knows the self as the content of the concept "I", all do not know that the self is of the nature of the unattached consciousness-bliss. Because of the obstruction caused by nescience, which itself is made manifest by the self, they do not have discriminative knowledge. The present verse illustrates this by giving the analogy of the clouds hiding the sun. Children looking up at the cloud-cast sky imagine that the sun is without light. Similarly, the ignorant people look upon the self as what is limited and non-luminous. Hence the need for contemplation and discrimination. The self should be realized in its true nature — as what is distinct from the body, the sense organs, the mind, etc., as that which is clearly manifest as "I", as the witness-consciousness that is unrelated to, and unaffected by, anything, as the non-dual reality that is the self-luminous, homogeneous, intelligence. One should realize one's non-difference from the non-dual Reality through cease-

less contemplation. In the terminology of Patañjali's Yoga, this is called *samprajñāta-samādhi.*

In order to get this state of steadfast awareness, one has to practise yoga: one has to become a yogi. The cultivation of the virtues such as calmness, restraint, etc., the disciplining of the body, sense-organs, etc., the regulation of the breathing process — all these are helpful to gaining mind-control. It is the controlled and concentrated mind that is capable of perceiving the truth. The mind should finally be rendered free of modifications; and then the supreme Self becomes manifest. When the Sun of wisdom rises, the darkness of ignorance flees. This is liberation, *mokṣa.* It is of the nature of infinite, eternal bliss. The one who has this plenary experience is the true preceptor.

Verse Five

यत्सौख्याम्बुधिलेशलेशत इमे शक्रादयो निर्वृता
  यच्चित्ते नितरां प्रशान्तकलने लब्ध्वा मुनिर्निर्वृतः ।
यस्मिन्नित्यसुखाम्बुधौ गलितधीर्ब्रह्मैव न ब्रह्मविद्-
  यःकश्चित्स सुरेन्द्रवन्दितपदो नूनं मनीषा मम ॥

yat-saukhyāmbhudhi-leśa–leśata ime
śakrādayo nirvṛtāḥ
yac-citte nitarāṁ praśāntakalane
labdhvā munir-nirvṛtaḥ,

yasmin–nitya–sukhāmbudhau galita-
dhīr-brahmaiva na brahma-vit
yaḥ kaścit sa surendra-vandita-pado
nūnaṁ manīṣā mama.

That ocean of bliss, by taking a very small drop of which Indra and other gods become happy; that by gaining which in the mind that has become perfectly quiescent without modification, the ascetic experiences happiness; that ocean of eternal bliss, by dissolving the mind into which, one remains even as Brahman, and not merely as a knower of Brahman—he (who knows this), whoever he may be, is the one whose feet are adored by (even) the king of the gods. Surely, this is my conclusive view.

In this, the last verse, the fruit of knowledge — the supreme goal — is praised. The nature of the goal, which is release, is indicated by saying that it is unexcellable bliss, one vast ocean of happiness. The bliss that is release, which is but another expression for Brahman-Ātman, is compared to the ocean in order to give an idea of its limitlessness. It is bliss that does not bear even a trace of misery, and does not admit of anything exceeding it. Empirical happiness may be measured; but the

transcendent bliss is immeasurable. The higher one mounts in the orders of living beings, the happiness increases. The bliss that the knower of Brahman enjoys knows no bounds. Empirical happiness is as nothing before it. The highest conceivable happiness which we associate with the status of the gods such as Indra is but a minute particle of Brahman-bliss. After gaining Brahman-bliss, there is nothing else to be gained. The one who realizes Brahman is, in fact, not a knower of Brahman, but is Brahman itself. This is the ultimate and most adorable status, *parama-puruṣārtha*, the supreme human goal.

He who has dissolved his mind in the ocean of the plenary bliss is, verily, that ocean itself. This final experience is what is referred to in yoga as *asaṁprajñātasamādhi*. There is not the distinction, here, of subject and object, experiencer and the experienced. "He who has transcended the distinction of seeing and not-seeing, and remains in the pure status, is Brahman, and not merely a knower of Brahman." This is the status which is adored by the gods and the humans. He who has gained this status is the true preceptor.

In the status of release, there is total absence of misery (*duḥkhābhāva*), there is the experience of bliss (*sarvakāmāpti*), there is nothing further to be done (*kṛtakṛtyatva*) or gained (*prāpta-prāpyatva*). Misery is caused by nescience. In release

there is no misery, because nescience has been destroyed. In release there is supreme bliss, because the non-dual Self which is of the nature of eternal release is *parama-ānanda.* All desires are for attaining ends. Release is the final end; after attaining it, there could be no desire left. All our doings are for accomplishing some results which we long for; the greatest fruit is release; after realising it, there is nothing more to be done. The ultimate gain is release; after gaining it, nothing remains to be gained.

The one who has realised the final goal which is release is the true preceptor.

Epilogue

The divine untouchable listened to the verses of the *Manīṣāpañcakam* replete with the highest wisdom. In fact, it was to occasion the composition of this quintad of verses that this drama was enacted. It was now time that the disguise was discarded. In the place of the untouchable there now stood Śiva, the lord of the universe (Viśvanātha); and the dogs had assumed their original form, viz. that of the four Vedas. The Ācārya offered obeisance to the Lord, and gave expression to the great truth that while at the lower levels of experience there are differences between God and the soul such as the one between master and ser-

vant, or the one between whole and part, from the standpoint of the supreme reality there is no difference whatsoever:

दासस्तेऽहं देहदृष्ट्याऽस्मि शंभो
जातस्तेंऽशो जीवदृष्ट्या त्रिदृष्टे ।
सर्वस्याऽऽत्मन्नात्मदृष्ट्या त्वमेवे-
त्येवं मे धीर्निश्चिता सर्वशास्त्रैः ॥

dāsaste'haṁ deha–dṛṣṭyā 'smi śaṁbho
jātaste'ṁśo jīva-dṛṣṭyā tridṛṣṭe,
sarvasyātmann–ātma–dṛṣṭyā tvamevety-
evaṁ me dhīr–niścitā sarva–śāstraiḥ

"From the standpoint of the body, O Śiva, I am Thy servant; from the standpoint of the soul, O Thou with three eyes, I become a part of Thine; and O the Self of all, from the standpoint of the Self, I am verily Thou: this is my settled conclusion reached with the help of all *Śāstras.*"

The Lord Śiva was profoundly pleased: He showered His blessings on Śaṅkara, His own *Avatāra,* for the successful fulfilment of the great mission of re-establishing spiritual unity, and then disappeared into the Formless whence He had taken shape.

No 'High' and 'Low' for the Wise

The *dharmas* (virtuous actions) pertaining to caste, stage in life, etc., that are performed by those who are without attachment, are the cause for attaining the status of gods, etc., and are high and pure. The *dharmas* that are mixed with *adharma* (unrighteousness) lead to the attainment of the status of humans, and are middling. The types of activities that are *adharma* bring about the status of animals, etc., and are low. When one realizes the self that is one, non-dual, and free from all illusory assumptions, one does not attain the different kinds of status, high, middling, and low. This is just like the intelligent one not seeing the defilement in the sky that is seen by children. Then (*i.e.*, when the self is realized), the mind does not arise in the forms of gods, etc., that are the results of activities, high, middling, and low. Indeed, in the absence of the cause the effect does not arise, even as crops do not appear in the absence of seeds.

—from Śaṅkara's Commentary on the Māṇḍūkya-kārikā.

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Śaṅkara listened to the words of wisdom that fell from the lips of the untouchable, and at once knew that it was Lord Śiva Himself that had come in the guise of the *caṇḍāla*. In truth, it was a piece of mono-acting — a case of the same Reality playing the double role of the teacher and the taught. The untouchable and the Bhagavatpāda were both of them manifestations of the Supreme Śiva. The present drama was enacted so that Bhagavatpāda Śaṅkara could pour out of his heart the quintessence of the wisdom of unity in a quintad of scintillating verses, the *Manīṣā-pañcakam*.

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